

What is *Kids In Safety Seats?*

Maryland Kids In Safety Seats (KISS) is a statewide, non-profit program funded through federal and state grants. Our mission is to reduce injuries and death among Maryland's children by helping people to use child restraints (car seats and booster seats) correctly each time a child rides in a motor vehicle.

The Problem

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of unintentional injuries and death among children in the United States. Many of these deaths and injuries occur because children are not restrained correctly when riding in motor vehicles. Experience at car seat checks in Maryland shows that approximately 75 percent of children are riding in the wrong type of seat, or in seats that are not correctly installed in the vehicle.

KISS's solution to this problem is education. National data reveals that when child restraints are used correctly every time, the risk of death is reduced by 71 percent for infants, and by 54 percent for toddlers. Minor injuries are reduced by 50 percent*. For children 4 to 8 years old, booster seats reduce the risk of injury by 45% vs. safety belts alone.

**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration/ Safe Kids Worldwide /JAMA 2003*

KISS strives to:

- Educate the public on all child passenger safety issues
- Promote the proper and consistent use of car seats or booster seats
- Answer questions about Maryland's child passenger safety laws and safe transportation recommendations

Our services are routinely provided to all Maryland residents and visitors, including:

- Parents/other caregivers
- Childcare providers
- Schools
- Social service and family support organizations
- Medical and health professionals
- Law enforcement and fire/rescue professionals
- Safety advocates and injury prevention coalition members
- Anyone who transports young children

KISS Services

Car Seat Loaner Programs:

KISS coordinates loaner programs that rent car seats and booster seats at a minimal cost to families who cannot afford to purchase them. Loaner programs teach parents how to use a seat correctly for every ride. Programs provide appropriate seats based on the child's age and weight and the type of vehicle in which the child will be riding. In addition, there are special-needs loaner programs for children with certain medical conditions. Most programs charge a small fee. Seat availability may vary per site.



Technical Assistance and Referral Service:

• Presentations/Trainings

Presentations and trainings on child passenger safety are available to the public. KISS offers one and two-hour presentations which provide general child passenger safety overviews. These and other trainings are available upon request.

• Car Seat Check-ups

KISS provides assistance to Maryland safety organizations and groups conducting car seat check-up events. In addition, KISS staff conducts regularly scheduled car seat check-ups by appointment each month at the State Office Building Complex in Baltimore. There is no charge for this service, but appointments must be made through our Helpline at 800-370-SEAT.

• Referral Service

KISS maintains a current list of Permanent Fitting Stations where parents or other transporters may take their vehicle and car seat(s) to have specially-trained technicians check the seat for correct use. Most locations provide car seat checks free of charge, but only by appointment. Call the Helpline for a site near you.

Please note: Permanent Fitting Station sites often schedule appointments four to six weeks in advance. Please plan ahead.

Child Passenger Safety Clearinghouse:

KISS serves as Maryland's child passenger safety information clearinghouse by distributing educational materials, answering "safest practice" questions, and providing referrals to Loaner Programs and Permanent Fitting Stations. Requests for health fair displays are also scheduled.

**For child passenger safety
information, contact
KISS Helpline
800-370-SEAT (800-370-7328)
E-mail: kiss@dhmh.state.md.us**

Visit **KISS** on the Web!

Visit **www.mdkiss.org** for general child passenger safety information including Maryland's child passenger safety law, Frequently Asked Questions, lists of upcoming car seat check events, upcoming trainings, and links to other safety organizations.



The Maryland Child Passenger Safety Law requires that a child under 8 years old must ride in an appropriate child restraint,* unless the child is 4' 9" or taller, or weighs more than 65 pounds.

Children from 8 to 16 years old who are not secured in a child restraint must be secured in a vehicle seat belt.

*Child restraint includes car seats, booster seats or other federally approved child safety devices.



Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Maryland KISS Program

Martin O'Malley, *Governor*

Anthony G. Brown, *Lt. Governor*

Joshua M. Sharfstein, M.D., *Secretary, DHMH*



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The Department, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, ensures that qualified individuals with disabilities are given an opportunity to participate in and benefit from DHMH services, programs, benefits and employment opportunities.

Have questions about **Car Seat Safety?**



**Kids In
Safety Seats
has answers!**